



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/703,748	11/01/2000	Jeffrey R. Aamodt	418268823US	2107
45979	7590	05/01/2007		
PERKINS COIE LLP/MSFT P. O. BOX 1247 SEATTLE, WA 98111-1247			EXAMINER BASOM, BLAINE T	
			ART UNIT 2173	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 05/01/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/703,748	AAMODT ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Blaine Basom	2173	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 January 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 19-42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 19-42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                     | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Response to Arguments*

The Examiner acknowledges the Applicants' amendments to claims 19, 29, and 35. In light of these amendments, the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejection presented in the previous Office Action for claims 29-34 is withdrawn.

Regarding the pending claims, the Applicants submit that the Examiner agreed, during the telephone interview on December 28, 2006, that the Applicants' current amendments overcome the Schanel reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,704,028 to Schanel et al.). The Applicants further submit that the current claims recite a novel combination of elements that is neither taught nor suggested by Schanel and Microsoft Project 98 ("Using Microsoft Project 98," by Tim Pyron).

The Examiner, however, respectfully disagrees. During the telephone interview of December 28, 2006, the Examiner agreed that "amending the 'whereby' clause of claim 19 and the like to recite something similar to 'whereby the user can customize the display of project data on a task-by-task basis, such that a first graphical element representing a first task comprises different data fields and a different layout of data fields than a second graphical element representing a second task' overcomes Schanel." (Emphasis added. See the Continuation Sheet of the Interview Summary, mailed 1/08/2007). The motivation for such an amendment being to further define the independent claims to express that the user can amend graphical elements on a task-by-task basis such that at least two simultaneously displayed graphical elements, each representing a particular task, can have different data fields and a different layout of data fields.

Art Unit: 2173

Such a feature is not taught by the Schanel reference. However, the current amended claims express no such feature.

Claim 19, for example, recites "...whereby the user can customize the display of the project data on a task-by-task basis, such that the graphical element displayed in the first format comprises different data fields and different layout of data fields than the graphical element displayed in the second format," as added by amendment. Independent claims 29 and 35 include similar language. That is, the claims require changing a graphical element from a first format to a second format, whereby the graphical element displayed in the first format comprises different data fields and a different layout out of data fields than the graphical element displayed in the second format (and whereby the graphical element in the first format and the graphical element in the second format represent the same task). Such claim language, however, does little to further define the claim, because it is essentially repeats what is already required elsewhere in the claim. For example, claim 19 requires the second format to include "a second border surrounding a second set of cells arranged in a second layout different from the first layout, the second set of cells being configured to display a second set of data fields of the task different from the first set of data fields" (emphasis added), i.e. that the second format comprises different data fields and a different layout of data fields than the first format. As described *infra*, Schanel teaches changing a graphical element from a first format to a second format, whereby the graphical element displayed in the first format comprises different data fields and a different layout out of data fields than the graphical element displayed in the second format. Schanel thereby teaches the features of the Applicants amended claim language.

The Applicants' arguments have thus been fully considered, but are not persuasive.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 19-22, 24-30, and 32-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,704,028, which is attributed to Schanel et al. In general, Schanel presents a method for creating graphics charts having data fields displayed therein (for example, see column 3, line 55 – column 4, line 19).

Regarding claim 19, Schanel teaches providing project data for a project, the project data identifying tasks of the project, each task being defined by a plurality of data fields (for example, see column 4, lines 4-19; column 13, line 16 – column 14, line 56; and figure 2). Schanel demonstrates that such project data may be displayed in a chart, with each task displayed as a graphical element, and with the plurality of data fields associated with the task being displayed within the graphical element (for example, see figure 2). Schanel further discloses that the user may select one of these graphical elements (for example, see column 7, lines 7-16), and select from amongst various displayed options for reformatting the selected graphical element: the user may modify the shape and/or border of the graphical element (for example, see column 7, lines 7-16), the user may add or remove each of the data fields from within the graphical element (see column 14, lines 1-10), and that the user may move the location of data fields within the element (for example, see column 14, line 56 – column 15, line 22). The resulting graphical element is displayed according to the selected options, whereby the user can customize the data fields of

Art Unit: 2173

each graphical element on a task-by-task basis (for example, see column 15, lines 39-50 and figure 2: the user can enter different data into the fields for each task, thus customizing the display of the fields). Accordingly, Schanel teaches: providing project data for a project, the project data identifying tasks of the project, each task being defined by a plurality of data fields (for example, see column 4, lines 4-19; column 13, line 16 – column 14, line 56; and figure 2); displaying a graphical representation of the provided project data, wherein a task is represented as a graphical element displayed in a first format, the first format of the graphical element including a first border surrounding a first set of cells arranged in a first layout, the first set of cells being configured to display a first set of data fields of the task (for example, see figure 2); receiving from a user a selection of the graphical element representing the task (for example, see column 7, lines 7-16); displaying options for formatting the selected graphical element (for example, see column 7, lines 7-16; column 14, lines 1-10; and column 14, line 56 – column 15, line 22); receiving from the user a selection of a second format for the selected graphical element, the second format including a second border surrounding a second set of cells arranged in a second layout different from the first layout, the second set of cells being configured to display a second set of data fields of the task different from the first set of data fields (for example, see column 7, lines 7-16; column 14, lines 1-10; and column 14, line 56 – column 15, line 22); and representing the selected graphical element in the selected second format whereby the user can customize the display of the data fields of the project data on a task-by-task basis (for example, see column 15, lines 39-50 and figure 2). Since the user can select from amongst various options for changing the data fields and the layout of the data fields (see e.g. column 14, lines 1-10; and column 14, line 56 – column 15, line 22: the user can add or remove each of the

data fields from within the graphical element, and can move the location of data fields within the element), the user can thus customize the display of the project data on task-by-task basis such that the graphical element displayed in the first format (i.e. before user selection of the options) comprises different data fields and a different layout of data fields than the graphical element displayed in the second format (i.e. after user selection of the options). Schanel thus teaches a method like that of claim 19, which is for customizing a graphical representation of project data.

Concerning claim 29, Schanel teaches that the above-described method may be implemented via a program stored in the memory of a computer (for example, see column 5, line 38 – column 6, line 19). Such a computer memory used to implement the above-described method of Schanel is considered a “computer-readable medium” like that recited in claim 29.

As per claim 20, Schanel discloses that the user may add particular data fields for display within a graphical element (see column 14, lines 1-10). Accordingly, if data fields are added, the above-described second set of cells comprises more cells configured to display the second set of data fields than the first set of cells.

Concerning claim 21, Schanel demonstrates that at least one of the first and second sets of cells may include a label, i.e. a field name (for example, see column 15, lines 1-9).

With respect to claims 22 and 30, it is understood that the charts of Schanel may be saved, with each graphical element in their current format, so that they may be re-displayed at a later time, as is well known in the art (for example, see column 13, lines 52-62). That is, an association between the task represented by a selected graphical element and a selected second format may be stored so that when the graphical representation of the provided project data is re-displayed, the graphical element for the task can be displayed in the selected second format.

As per claims 24-26 and 32-33, Schanel discloses displaying options for formatting a selected graphical element, the options being displayed via a dialog box for specifying a style of a graphical element (for example, see column 7, lines 7-16), and a separate dialog box for specifying how data within a graphical element is to be displayed (for example, see column 13, line63 -column 15, line 22).

Concerning claims 27 and 34, Schanel discloses that the dialog box for specifying how data within a graphical element is to be displayed displays an indication of pre-existing templates for display of data (for example, see the dialog box of figure 10).

As per claim 28, Schanel demonstrates that each task has data variables (for example, see figure 2), and discloses that the user may add or remove each of these data variables from within graphical elements representing tasks. That is, the above-described selected second format specifies the data variables of the task whose values are to be displayed within the selected graphical representation.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 23, 31, and 35-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the U.S. Patent of Schanel, which is described above, and also over Microsoft Project 98



(hereafter referred to as “Microsoft Project”), as described by Tim Pyron in the book entitled “Using Microsoft Project 98.”

Regarding claims 23, 31, and 35, Schanel teaches a method by which the user may generate charts of project data, as is described above. Specifically, as described above in the rejection for e.g. claims 19 and 29, Schanel teaches: providing project data for a project, the project data identifying tasks of the project, each task being defined by a plurality of data fields; displaying a graphical representation of the provided project data, wherein a task is represented as a graphical element displayed in a first shape format, the first shape format of the graphical element including a first border in a first shape surrounding a first set of cells arranged in a first layout, the first set of cells being configured to display a first set of data fields of the task; receiving from a user a selection of the graphical element representing the task; displaying options for formatting the selected graphical element; receiving from the user a selection of a second shape format for the selected graphical element, the second shape format including a second border in a second shape surrounding a second set of cells arranged in a second layout different from the first layout, the second set of cells being configured to display a second set of data fields of the task different from the first set of data fields; and representing the selected graphical element in the selected second shape format whereby the user can customize the display of the data fields of the project data on a task-by-task basis, such that the graphical element displayed in the first shape format comprises different data fields and a different layout of data fields than the graphical element displayed in the second shape format. Schanel, however, does not explicitly disclose that the user may customize the data fields on a category-by-category basis, i.e. Schanel does not explicitly disclose that the user may select a category of

Art Unit: 2173

tasks, and select a particular format, whereby in result, the data fields of the tasks assigned to the selected category are re-displayed in the particular format, as is expressed in claims 23, 31, and 35. Nevertheless, as disclosed by Pyron, Microsoft Project is a computer-implemented project management tool executed to generate and implement a project plan, including a schedule of tasks to be accomplished in a particular sequence (see “Why You Should Use Microsoft Project,” beginning on page 2). Like the program of Schanel, Microsoft Project may be used to generate a chart of project data, wherein a task is displayed as a graphical element, e.g. as a text field (for example, see pages 50-53; and pages 225-237). Regarding the claimed invention, Microsoft Project also provides the ability to format such text fields representing tasks according to the category of the task. Project specifically teaches, via a “Text Styles” dialog box: receiving from the user a selection of a category; receiving from the user a selection of a third format; and re-displaying the data fields of the tasks assigned to the selected category in the selected third format (see pages 697-700). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Schanel and Microsoft Project before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the tasks of Schanel such that the user may select a category of tasks, and a third format for this category of tasks, wherein response, data fields of tasks assigned to the selected category are re-displayed in the selected third format, as is done by Microsoft Project. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a combination because formatting a chart of project data according to the categories of tasks would allow the user to better perceive the different categories of tasks, and how they relate, as is demonstrated by Microsoft Project.

As per claim 36, Schanel discloses that the user may add particular data fields for display within a graphical element (see column 14, lines 1-10). Accordingly, if data fields are added, the above-described second set of cells comprises more cells configured to display the second set of data fields than the first set of cells.

Concerning claim 37, Schanel demonstrates that at least one of the first and second sets of cells may include a label, i.e. a field name (for example, see column 15, lines 1-9).

With respect to claim 38, it is understood that the charts of Schanel may be saved, with each graphical element in their current format, so that they may be re-displayed at a later time, as is well known in the art (for example, see column 13, lines 52-62). That is, an associated between the task represented by a selected graphical element and a selected second format may be stored so that when the graphical representation of the provided project data is re-displayed, the graphical element for the task can be displayed in the selected second format.

As per claims 39-41, Schanel discloses displaying options for formatting a selected graphical element, the options being displayed via a dialog box for specifying a style of a graphical element (for example, see column 7, lines 7-16), and a separate dialog box for specifying how data within a graphical element is to be displayed (for example, see column 13, line 63 -column 15, line 22).

As per claim 42, Schanel demonstrates that each task has data variables (for example, see figure 2), and discloses that the user may add or remove each of these data variables from within graphical elements representing tasks. That is, the above-described selected second format specifies the data variables of the task whose values are to be displayed within the selected graphical representation of tasks assigned to the selected category.

***Conclusion***

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Blaine Basom whose telephone number is (571) 272-4044. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Cabeza can be reached on (571) 272-4048. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

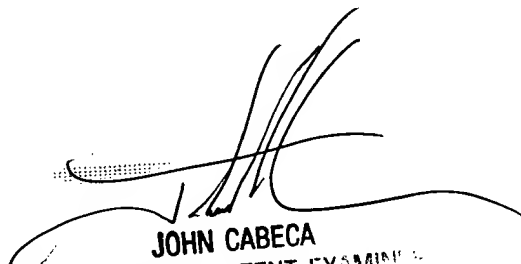
Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR

Art Unit: 2173

system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

btb

4/27/2007



**JOHN CABECA**  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100